

Newport Pagnell,
February 1st, 1896.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1895.

To the Chairman and Members of the Rural District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

The population of this District at the Census of 1891 was 25,613, and is about the same at the present time.

In July last the Parishes of Fenny Stratford and Sympson were formed into an Urban District. I was subsequently appointed Medical Officer of Health to the new Urban Council, and a Sanitary Inspector was appointed. As, however, this has been done quite recently, I have included Fenny Stratford in this Report. Three hundred and eighty-seven deaths occurred during the year, which gives a death-rate of 15·1 per thousand.

The following table shows how this compares with former years :

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------|----|------|------|----|------|------|----|------|
| In 1886 | .. | 17·2 | 1890 | .. | 16·3 | 1893 | .. | 17·6 |
| 1887 | .. | 18·2 | 1891 | .. | 16·4 | 1894 | .. | 14·6 |
| 1889 | .. | 15·6 | 1892 | .. | 19·4 | 1895 | .. | 15·1 |

The high death rates in 1892 and 1893 were due to Epidemic Influenza.

The average death-rate in Rural England is about 17 per thousand.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

Two hundred and sixty-eight cases of infectious disease were notified to me during the year. In other years, during which the Notification Act has been in force, the number was, in 1894, 156; in 1893, 198.

The great increase of last year was due to the frequent epidemics of Scarlet Fever, 207 cases being notified.

There were epidemics of Scarlet Fever at Olney, Stoke Goldington, Stantonbury, and Hanslope, and cases occurred in almost every parish in the District. As each case is notified, it is visited by myself or the Sanitary Inspector, printed directions as to isolation and disinfection are given and explained; the children are kept away from school, and, after the period of infection is over, the house and clothing, etc., are fumigated with sulphur, under the superintendence of the Sanitary Inspector. Where cases of Scarlet Fever cannot be sent to an isolation hospital, this is all, and even more, than is required to be done by the Local Government Board; but very little good is done in the way of lessening the number of cases, for the following reasons:—

1. Unless the first case that occurs in a family is immediately removed to an isolation hospital it is impossible to prevent the disease spreading to the other members of the family, who are susceptible in an ordinary-sized working-man's house.

2. It is impossible always to prevent the children of poor people who have had Scarlet Fever, and who, while they are still in an infectious condition, are quite well in health, from mixing with other children.

3. There will always be a certain number of cases which are not notified, either because the disease is very mild and therefore no doctor asked to see them, which is generally the case, or occasionally because the matter is purposely concealed to avoid trouble. When from any cause the cases are not notified, the children return to school after a short absence and it is there that the disease is principally spread. If one child goes to school day after day while peeling from Scarlet Fever, the result is probably the same as if a dozen went.

After the epidemic of Scarlet Fever at Hanslope, I examined all the children in the two schools soon after they were re-opened and I found three children whose hands were peeling and whom I have no doubt had recently had mild attacks of Scarlet Fever, which had been either unrecognised or ignored by the parents.

I have thought for a long time that if we can do nothing else with Scarlet Fever, we ought at least to keep it out of the schools, and the only way in which this could be done, with any degree of certainty, would be, that when Scarlet Fever occurs in any parish, all the children who attend the school should be examined by a medical man, say once a week, and all at all suspicious cases kept away for a time. If this were done, schools would very seldom require closing, and so a great hindrance to education avoided. Besides this, however, an isolation hospital would be of great benefit and convenience as is shown by the following case:—

At a boarding school in Bletchley, where there were about twenty boys living in the house, one was taken ill with Scarlet Fever ; he was at once placed in an ambulance and sent to the infectious ward in the Bedford Infirmary, a distance of twenty miles. The room he had occupied was thoroughly disinfected, and all his clothing, etc., was either boiled or fumigated ; no other cases occurred, and the school was not interrupted. But isolation hospitals must be permanent ones, built for the purpose, and provided with the proper nurses, otherwise parents will not, and wisely so, allow their children to be taken there.

The cheap temporary buildings frequently put up by the smaller Sanitary Authorities have invariably proved useless.

If the County Council would erect four Scarlet Fever Hospitals in convenient positions, and provided with proper ambulances, it would be all that is required for this county.

One person was prosecuted by the Council under the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act for not notifying a case of Scarlet Fever. The Magistrates imposed a fine of three shillings and costs. This is the first prosecution under the Act in the District.

Eleven cases of Diphtheria were notified. This small number is very satisfactory, as Diphtheria is certainly indirectly, if not directly, associated with defective sanitation. Throughout the country Diphtheria has been increasing of late years ; in this district it has been decreasing.

| | | | | |
|-------------|------|------------|----|-------|
| In the year | 1892 | there were | 39 | cases |
| „ | 1893 | „ | 83 | „ |
| „ | 1894 | „ | 14 | „ |
| „ | 1895 | „ | 11 | „ |

In Fenny Stratford, where so many cases used to occur some years ago, there were none last year, and I think it is fair to assume that this is due to the present abundant supply of water by which all the house drains are kept flushed.

Twenty-eight cases of Typhoid Fever were notified. Twenty of these occurred as an epidemic in Bradwell, which commenced in June and ended in November. All but three of the infected families drank water provided by the London and North-Western Railway Company's supply, which supplies about three-fourths of the inhabitants.

This water was analysed, and said to be good drinking water ; and this was also borne out by the fact that this water is used by the whole of Wolverton, where there was no Typhoid Fever at the time. The milk supply was derived from four different farms ; two of these farms, from which most of the milk came, were inspected and found to be in a satisfactory condition. Many complaints had been made in Bradwell of bad smells from the drains during the hot weather, and this was not due, for the most part, to any defective trapping or disconnection, but

to the condition of the sewers. These sewers are old, and were found to contain a considerable amount of deposit, and they were badly ventilated. New man holes have been made on these sewers so that they can easily be cleaned out, and ventilation shafts have been erected in the course of the sewers, and large ventilation shafts are now being placed at the end of each sewer. No death occurred. I consider that these cases were not due to contaminated water or milk, as is generally the case, but they appeared to follow a number of cases of summer diarrhoea of a severe kind and were connected with the frequent escape of sewer gas from the badly ventilated sewers. A special report on this outbreak of Typhoid Fever and other matters relating to Bradwell was made to the Local Government Board in October.

Thirty cases of Erysipelas were notified during the year; they occurred at different times all over the district; there was no epidemic.

WATER SUPPLY.

The parishes in the district provided with public water supplies are the same as I mentioned last year, though water has been laid on to several houses in Newport Pagnell, Fenny Stratford, Sympson and Bletchley. The following is a list of parishes and estimated population provided with public water supply:

| | | | |
|--|----|----|--------|
| Newport Pagnell provided by District Council | .. | .. | 3700 |
| Fenny Stratford | „ | „ | 1900 |
| Sympson | „ | „ | 546 |
| Bletchley | „ | „ | 332 |
| Bradwell by L. & N.W. Railway Company | .. | .. | 2184 |
| Stoke Goldington, by private owner | .. | .. | 767 |
| Willen | .. | .. | 66 |
| Lathbury, by District Council | .. | .. | 146 |
| Great Brickhill | „ | .. | 522 |
| Little Brickhill | „ | .. | 234 |
| Walton | .. | .. | 93 |
| Woughton | .. | .. | 208 |
| | | | <hr/> |
| | | | 10,698 |
| | | | <hr/> |

The condition of the water supply of Hanslope, Newton Longville, Water Eaton, Wavendon, and Bow Brickhill, has been before the District Council during the year.

1. Hanslope, population 1489. A sanitary engineer has been employed by the District Council to get out a scheme of water supply for this parish. The scheme failed owing to objections made by the owner of the estate on which it was proposed to obtain water. A fresh site is now being sought.

2. Newton Longville, population 415. It was at first proposed to carry water to this village from the Fenny Stratford main, but this was considered too expensive. A new well has been sunk and two old wells restored, pumps erected over them, and the water analyzed and stated to be good. The Parish Council has also asked the District Council to supply another part of the village from a spring by gravitation.

3. Water Eaton, population 241. The Parish Council has recently asked the District Council to require the owner of the village to improve the water supply by sinking new wells.

4. Wavendon village, population 400. The water from a well which supplies most of the population of the village of Wavendon, having been analyzed and condemned, the well was cleaned out, some drains removed from close by and a new pump erected. The water was afterwards analyzed and found to be good.

5. Bow Brickhill, population 464. A private scheme of water supply provided by an owner of property has been completed during the year and supplies about 100 persons. A proposal to carry on the water of the Fenny Stratford public supply from Great Brickhill to another part of this village, is now being considered, and is very urgently required.

DRAINAGE.

In the village of Old Bradwell a complete new system of sewers has been laid down; additions have also been made to the sewers in the villages of Sherington and Castlethorpe.

DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE.

The contents of the sewers of Fenny Stratford pass into a brook which flows into the river Ouzel, and also into the Canal, without any preliminary purification. Something is being done to lessen the nuisance by constantly cleaning out the outfalls, but the nuisance must in time tend to become greater, and the Urban District Council will be obliged to purchase land on which the sewage may be disposed.

The contents of the sewers of Newport Pagnell pass into the rivers Ouse and Lovatt. No scheme of purification is adopted. In consequence of complaints made, the County Council appointed a Committee to investigate the matter, the result was, that a letter was written to the Rural District Council which stated that the General Purposes Committee were satisfied that the rivers were being polluted by sewage carried into them without treatment, and further they requested the Rural District Council to prevent this being done in future, failing which, they must recommend the County Council to put in force their powers and other Rivers Pollution Acts. It is certain that

before long the Rural District Council will be obliged to purchase land on which the sewage of Newport Pagnell can be purified before passing into the river.

The contents of the sewers of Bradwell, consisting for the most part of slop water and surface water, pass into three small brooks which flow into the river Ouse. One of these brooks which receives the greater part of the sewage of Bradwell, and also the effluent water from the Wolverton sewage works, frequently gets into a very foul condition.

During the past summer, many complaints were made to the District Council by the inhabitants of Bradwell of the nuisance caused by the condition of this brook. Owing to a difference of opinion between the Newport Pagnell Authority and the Wolverton Authority as to how far each was responsible for the condition of the brook, some delay was caused. In consequence of this, a number of the inhabitants of Bradwell petitioned the Local Government Board to inquire into the matter.

The Local Government Board asked for a report from me as to the sanitary condition of Bradwell, which was sent.

In the mean time the brook was cleaned out at the expense of the two Authorities. In this way the nuisance has been removed for a time, but it must recur soon if nothing more is done. It will ultimately become necessary for the two Authorities to purchase some land in which the sewage of Bradwell and the effluent water from the Wolverton sewage works may be treated. This is necessary because the effluent water from the Wolverton works is often much too impure to pass directly into a river.

The Milk Shop, Dairies and Cow Sheds Order has been put in force in this District during the year, and also in the Urban District of Fenny Stratford. The Sanitary Inspectors have been appointed Inspectors under the Act.

Ten houses have been reported to the Council under the Housing of the Working Classes and two have been closed.

The following is a summary of the sanitary work done during the year :—

| | | | |
|---|----|----|-----|
| Numbers of reports made to District Council, Committees and Parish Councils | .. | .. | 746 |
| Public wells reported on and remedied | .. | .. | 2 |
| Samples of water submitted to Analyst | .. | .. | 10 |
| Cottages with defective water supply remedied | .. | | 34 |
| Laid on to houses from the Council's public mains | .. | | 23 |
| Unwholesome dwellings cleansed and lime washed | .. | | 81 |
| Common lodging houses visited and periodically cleansed | | | 2 |

Newport Pagnell Rural District Council.

DR M. M. HAILEY,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Newport Pagnell.

Feb 29

1896
RIGHT & COFFEE ST

Dear Sir

I send you a copy
of my annual report for
1895.


Yours faithfully

M M Hailey

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The British Medical

Association



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| | | | |
|--|----|----|-----|
| New common lodging houses registered | .. | .. | 1 |
| Foul ponds cleansed | .. | .. | 1 |
| Defective house drains remedied | .. | .. | 62 |
| Sink pipes improved and disconnected from drains | .. | .. | 21 |
| Cesspools filled in and drains connected to sewers | .. | .. | 4 |
| House drains connected to new sewers | .. | .. | 47 |
| Foul piggeries reported on and remedied | .. | .. | 80 |
| Accumulation of ashes, refuse, manure, etc., removed by order | .. | .. | 173 |
| Ventilation shafts erected in connected with private drains | | | 21 |
| Ventilation shafts erected in connection with public sewers | | | 4 |
| In Newport Pagnell, Fenny Stratford, Olney and Bradwell, scavenging is done by the Sanitary Authority. One hundred and two houses infected with Scarlet Fever have been fumigated and otherwise disinfected by the Sanitary Inspector. | | | |

I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

M. M. Hailey,

Medical Officer of Health.

